



# the COOPERATOR

**MARCH 2024** | For the members of Kay Electric Cooperative  
A supplement to Oklahoma Living



Left: KEC electrician Tom Gleason (left) with fellow Oklahoma Energy Trails volunteers in Guatemala.

## Empowering lives, illuminating hope

Oklahoma Energy Trails volunteers bring first-time electricity to 1,200 families

**D**uring a 14-day mission trip, Oklahoma's electric cooperatives lit up lives, at home and abroad. Farmers in the mountainous region of Alta Verapaz in north-central Guatemala had their homes and farming structures fully equipped to safely receive electricity for the first time.

Kay Electric Cooperative electrician Tom Gleason had the opportunity to volunteer on the project alongside seven other volunteers from Oklahoma's electric cooperatives, as well as volunteers from cooperatives in Colorado and Arkansas.

The project—which is a partnership be-

tween the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's (NRECA) philanthropic arm, NRECA International, and Heifer International—consisted of conducting internal wiring of approximately 186 homes and farming structures in 38 villages. Volunteers installed breaker boxes, light sockets, outlets and switches as well as meters on concrete poles outside of the homes. The mission is estimated to have empowered nearly 1,200 farmers and their families to increase incomes and economic opportunity, improve quality of life and enable agricultural communities to thrive.

"It was a humbling and rewarding ex-

perience to be able to provide power to those who were without," Gleason says.

"The experience is one I would suggest anyone take part in if they are given the opportunity," he says. "The weather can be unpredictable, the remote terrain is some of the most difficult to navigate, the work can be tough and the days long, but the reward of providing power to those who were without was well worth it."

As Gleason reflected back on his experience one thing he said he will never forget is how joyful the villagers were—

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## OUR MISSION

Founded in 1937, Kay Electric Cooperative remains focused on our primary mission: to provide safe, affordable and reliable power for our member-owners. Today, our service territory includes 2,263 miles of line and more than 5,900 meters located in Kay, Grant, Noble, Osage and Garfield counties.

## CONTACT US

Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
580-363-1260 | 800-535-1079  
300 W. Doolin Ave. | PO Box 607  
Blackwell, OK 74631  
[www.kayelectric.coop](http://www.kayelectric.coop)

## REPORT AN OUTAGE

Call 800-535-1079 or use Kay Electric's SmartHub at [www.kayelectric.coop](http://www.kayelectric.coop) or download the SmartHub app for smartphone or tablet.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## EASY WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

- Pay online using SmartHub at [www.kayelectric.coop](http://www.kayelectric.coop) or download the SmartHub app for smartphone or tablet.
- Pay over the phone: 800-535-1079.
- Pay in person at Kay Electric or use our 24-hour payment drop box located at 300 W. Doolin Ave. in Blackwell.
- Pay via automatic draft of your checking or savings account or major credit card. Sign up for auto-pay online at [www.kayelectric.coop](http://www.kayelectric.coop).

# MANAGER'S MESSAGE

## Artificial Intelligence

By Jason Boesch, CEO

You have no doubt heard the words Artificial Intelligence (AI) to the point of exhaustion these days. It's unavoidable. TV, newspapers, grocery stores, and everywhere in between. It's the hot topic everyone can't talk enough about. Almost makes one wonder what we used to talk about before AI.


Now remind me what exactly is AI? Artificial intelligence is the science of making machines that can think like humans. It can do things that are considered "smart." AI technology can process large amounts of data in ways, unlike humans. The goal for AI is to be able to do things such as recognize patterns, make decisions, and judge like humans. Great, there goes the neighborhood.

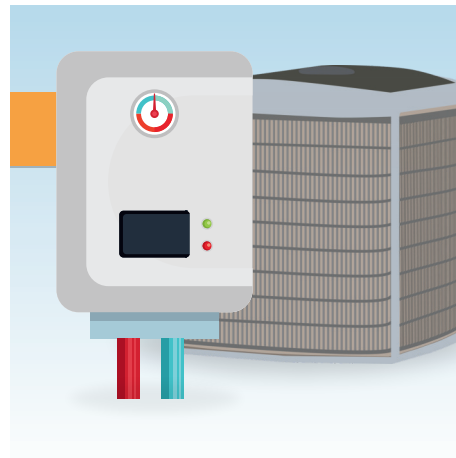
We are told it will be the best thing ever and also the worst thing ever. I suppose reality will be somewhere in between. The experts also say no part of society will be untouched by it. Customer service, healthcare, education, finance, logistics, food production, leisure, manufacturing, and of course utilities.

Electric utilities are researching how AI might predict future outages and en-



hance grid resilience. There is also the analysis of consumption patterns, load distribution, and performance metrics to design our substations and lines the most efficiently. All this to identify patterns, trends, and inefficiencies and make informed decisions about grid operations.

The advancement of AI, like any new technology, will require human good judgment and diligence to use it appropriately. It will also require our intervention to establish responsible boundaries. You can be rest assured Kay Electric will actively monitor these trends and use experienced, practical judgment for what works and what doesn't. As Spock said in the 1968 Star Trek film, "Computers make excellent and efficient servants, but I have no wish to serve under them." 

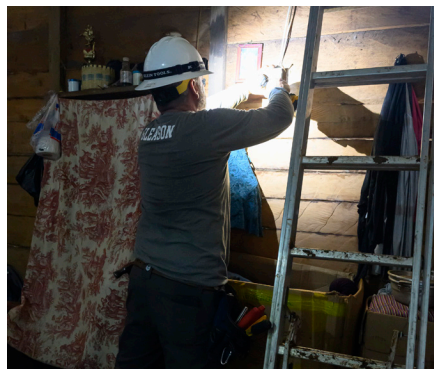


## We offer rebates!

Did you know Kay Electric offers rebates on hot water tanks, heat pumps and attic insulation?

For more information visit [www.kayelectric.coop/rebates](http://www.kayelectric.coop/rebates) or call 580-363-1260.





Left: Gleason (back left) and Central Rural Electric volunteer Jerry Cundiff (back right) spend time with kids in Alta Verapaz. Right: Gleason wires a home in Guatemala.

even without electricity. He says he feels thankful for having the opportunity to use his skills to bring them the gift of power.

Most of all he enjoyed interacting with the villagers and will carry those memories with him forever. He is also so impressed with the generosity and hospitality displayed at each village. "They

were so appreciative that we are there," Gleason says. "They're so willing to help. They'd carry our bags and our ladders and help in any way they could."

The experience left a lasting impact on Gleason, one he will forever be grateful for. "I'm thankful to be a part of something that not only changed their lives, but changed mine as well," he says. 🇬🇹



### Kay Electric awarded Best of Kay County

Kay Electric was chosen as the best place to work in Kay County by Blackwell Journal-Tribune readers. Kay Electric CEO Jason Boesch and Director of Communications Desiree Masterson-Whitehead received the recognition on behalf of the co-op. We are honored to have been chosen!

## LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

*Save the date*  
**KEC DRIVE-THRU**  
**2024**  
**ANNUAL MEETING**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 12**  
**3 to 7 p.m. registration**

Kay Electric Cooperative  
300 W. Doolin, Blackwell

Look for your meeting registration card in the mail. **Bring your card** with you for your **chance to win** a John Deer Gator, zero turn mower, pressure washer, a Stihl weed eater, plus gift cards & cash!

*Plus each member will receive a \$25 registration gift!*



## GOOD COOKIN'

### Banana Pudding

#### Ingredients

- 2, 3.2-ounce packages instant vanilla pudding
- 4 cups cold milk
- 8 ounces cool whip
- 11-ounce box vanilla wafers
- 8 bananas, peeled and sliced



#### Instructions

In a medium bowl, whisk together the pudding mix and milk; beat for 2 minutes. Allow the pudding to stand for 3 minutes. Fold in 1/3 of the cool whip. To the bottom of a trifle dish, add a layer of vanilla wafers. Add 1/4 of the pudding mixture on top of the wafers, and top that with banana slices. Repeat layers to fill the trifle dish. Spread the remaining cool whip; top with crushed wafers and banana slices.



#### K-UP Funds Available

Could your organization use a little help? Apply for a K-UP grant! For details visit [www.kayelectric.coop/k](http://www.kayelectric.coop/k). The next deadline is April 1.



### ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

Lengthen the life of your clothes dryer with regular cleaning. Clean the lint filter after every load, which improves air circulation and safety. Check the lint trap opening to ensure it's clean. Use a vacuum to remove any lint that's fallen inside the opening. If you use dryer sheets, check the lint filter for residue build-up. Remove any residue with hot water and a nylon brush or toothbrush. Over time, dryer sheets can leave a film on the filter, which can affect the performance of the motor.

## \$25 is hiding in this issue!

If you spot your account number hidden in these pages, please contact Kay Electric to claim a \$25 credit on your electric bill. If no account numbers are claimed, the prize money will carry over to the next month for a maximum bill credit of \$50. Call 800-535-1079 or email [contact@kayelectric.coop](mailto:contact@kayelectric.coop) to claim your prize.

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